

THE DAILY GK DOSE

INDIA CLIMBS 80TH IN HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX 2026

- **Improved Global Rank:** India has climbed five places to rank 80th in the world for 2026, up from its 85th position in 2025. It currently shares this rank with Algeria and Niger.
- **Visa-Free Access:** Indian passport holders can now visit 55 destinations worldwide without a prior visa (via visa-free, visa-on-arrival, or ETA), which includes popular travel spots like Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Maldives.
- **Top & Bottom Performers:** Singapore remains the world's most powerful passport (192 destinations), followed by Japan and South Korea (188). At the other end, Afghanistan remains the weakest, ranked 101st with access to only 24 destinations.

MAHARASHTRA & TAMIL NADU LEAD EXPORT PREPAREDNESS INDEX 2024

- **Maharashtra Claims Top Spot:** Maharashtra has emerged as the Number 1 state in the "Large States" category, toppling Tamil Nadu, which has moved to the second position. Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh round out the top five.
- **Four Pillar Framework:** The rankings are based on 70 parameters across four key pillars: Policy & Governance, Business Ecosystem, Export Infrastructure, and Export Performance. Notably, the "Business Ecosystem" pillar

carries the highest weightage (40%).

- **Small States & UT Leaders:** In the category of "Small States and Union Territories," Uttarakhand secured the first rank, followed by Jammu and Kashmir and Nagaland, reflecting significant progress in export preparedness in non-coastal and hilly regions.

NATIONAL OLYMPIC EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME LAUNCHED



- **Integrated National Framework:** The NOEDP is a structured program providing Olympic education, ethics training, and professional development from grassroots to elite levels.
- **Leadership & Hub:** The National Olympic Academy (NOA), based in Ahmedabad, has been reactivated as a research and dialogue hub, led by IOA President PT Usha and Olympic medalist Gagan Narang.
- **Global Alignment:** The programme is aligned with the Olympic Charter and will collaborate with the International Olympic Academy (Olympia) to implement "athlete-centric" support systems, including career transition pathways and welfare initiatives.

IMPORTANT FACTS

CONSTITUTIONAL & GOV. FIGURES

- **President:** Droupadi Murmu
- **Vice President:** C. P. Radhakrishnan
- **Prime Minister:** Narendra Modi
- **Chief Justice of India:** B. R. Gavai
- **Chief Election Commissioner:** Gyanesh Kumar
- **CDS:** General Anil Chauhan
- **Chief of Army Staff:** General Upendra Dwivedi

KIDAMBI SRIKANTH SECURED VICTORY IN INDIA OPEN BADMINTON

- **Hard-Fought Opening Victory:** Former world number one Kidambi Srikanth advanced to the second round after a grueling 53-minute battle against fellow Indian Tharun Manneppalli, winning 15–21, 21–6, 21–19.
- **Breaking the Streak:** This victory was particularly significant as it was Srikanth's first win against Manneppalli after losing to the younger compatriot twice in straight games earlier in 2025.
- **Resurgence on Home Soil:** Despite a dip in momentum where he later lost to France's Christo Popov in a tight second-round match (14–21, 21–17, 17–21), Srikanth's performance was hailed as a positive sign of his grit and tactical net control as he aims to climb back up the BWF rankings.

RAKESH AGGARWAL APPOINTED AS DG, NIA

- **New Leadership:** Rakesh Aggarwal, a 1994-batch IPS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as the DG of the NIA. His tenure will last until his superannuation on August 31, 2028.
- **Succession and Stability:** He succeeds Sadanand Vasant Date (1990-batch), who was prematurely repatriated to Maharashtra in late December 2025 to lead the state police as DGP. Aggarwal had been holding the additional (interim) charge of the agency since December 31, 2025.
- **Counter-Terrorism Expertise:** Known as a seasoned investigator, Aggarwal was previously serving as the Special Director General of the NIA. He brings extensive experience from his tenures in the CBI and the Special Protection Group (SPG), making him a strategic choice for India's premier anti-terror agency.

Footnotes: NIA's Previous DG: Sadanand Vasant Date, HQ: New Delhi, Estd: 2008

SUJOY PAUL APPOINTED AS CHIEF JUSTICE CALCUTTA

- **Judicial Milestone:** Justice Sujoy Paul, who has been serving as the Acting Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court since

October 2025, was formally elevated to the position of permanent Chief Justice.

- **Vast Experience:** Originally from the Madhya Pradesh High Court (his parent High Court), Justice Paul has had a distinguished career spanning over 35 years. He previously served as a judge in both the Madhya Pradesh and Telangana High Courts before moving to Calcutta in July 2025.
- **Constitutional Appointment:** The appointment was made under Article 217(1) of the Constitution of India. Justice Paul is slated to serve in this capacity until his retirement on June 20, 2026, upon reaching the age of 62.

Footnotes: Calcutta's Previous Chief Justice: Soumen Sen, Mayor: Firhad Hakim

GAIL WINS SKOCH ESG AWARD 2025



- **Recognition for Business Agility:** GAIL was specifically conferred the award for Business Agility and Corporate Performance, highlighting its ability to adapt to changing market dynamics while maintaining a robust financial

and operational growth trajectory.

- **Clean Energy Leadership:** The award recognizes GAIL's pivotal role in leading India's transition toward a gas-based economy. The jury lauded its consistent focus on environmental responsibility, including its expanding portfolio in green hydrogen and renewable energy.

Footnotes: GAIL's Chairman & MD: Sandeep Kumar Gupta, HQ: New Delhi, Estd: 1984

DILBERT CREATOR SCOTT ADAMS PASSED AWAY

- **Voice of the Workplace:** Adams rose to global fame with Dilbert in 1989, a sharp satire of corporate life that was syndicated in over 2,000 newspapers across 65 countries at its peak.
- **Battle with Illness:** He passed away following a long battle with metastatic prostate cancer, a diagnosis he had publicly shared in May 2025. His death was announced by his former wife during a livestream on his YouTube channel.
- **Complex Legacy:** Despite his success as a satirist and bestselling author, his later years were overshadowed by controversy, culminating in major newspapers dropping his comic strip in 2023 over racist and inflammatory social media comments.

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

15.01-2026 / THURSDAY

- 1949 – Field Marshal K. M. Cariappa became 1st Indian Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army.
- 1970 – Nigerian Civil War ended; marked as Armed Forces Remembrance Day.
- 2001 - Wikipedia (free online encyclopedia) was launched